
Im in a Race?

Victory Life Church — Pastor Stan Roberts

“Strongholds” – Sunday May 29th, 2022

Hebrews 12:1-3 KJV

1 Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, 2 Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Previous MEN and WOMEN have PASSED THE PATON in this RACE and they can't receive the FINAL REWARD until we have ALL RUN OUR RACE.

Hebrews 11:39-40 NLT

39 All of these people we have mentioned received God's approval because of their faith, yet none of them received all that God had promised. 40 For God had far better things in mind for us that would also benefit them, for they can't receive the prize at the end of the race until we finish the race.

The scripture has an implication that since they lived and died by faith, then so should we.

How is your race going today?

Maybe you have some THINGS that are SLOWING YOU DOWN.

Maybe you have some THINGS that are HOLDING YOU BACK.

Maybe you have some THINGS that are IN YOUR WAY.

It's HARD to WIN when you are pulling a CART FULL OF BAGGAGE BEHIND YOU!

One of the GREATEST VICTORIES you can have is to come to the realization and self awareness that there could be something *CONTROLLING* or *HOLDING YOU BACK* and you *WANT* to do something about it!

2Corinthians 10:3-4 KJV

3 For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: 4 For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;

This is NOT about AN ASSAULT of the ENEMY but about AN OCCUPATION OF THE ENEMY!

We have scriptural INSTRUCTIONS on dealing with the ASSAULTS and BATTLES of the enemy but this is about BRINGING CHANGE to your CURRENT SITUATION.

The Strongholds he is talking about are things that are always in opposition to God's will for your life!_

Strongholds in our mind are a STRUCTURE in the subconscious unknowing area of involuntary action built on the bridge going from our thoughts to our actions.

It is elusive, subtle and ambiguous as a mist of perfume.

No one else can see it unless it chooses to manifest.

Only YOU can recognize it exists *before* it chooses to manifest.

Only YOU create it and only YOU can eliminate it.

That's WHY it's SO IMPORTANT that you ACKNOWLEDGE and DEAL WITH IT.

Whether it's CRIMINAL behavior or ADDICTION or just BAD BEHAVIOUR.

It all starts with a thought or suggestion, to contradiction of truth, to a behavior you would be ashamed of if it were known.

In our life we don't really have these WEAKNESSES that control us and control our actions.

What we really have are strongholds.

As long as we **call our stronghold a weakness** we'll never do anything about it.

All of us do have weaknesses in the areas of skill, talent, or ability.

But we're talking of **morals, ethics, integrity and character**.

2Corinthians 10:3-4 KJV

3 For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: 4 For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;

This is REFERENCING a DIFFERENT REALM of WARFARE_ even though it can SPILL OVER into the NATURAL REALM.

Strongholds don't just appear, they're built! Stronghold means castle. Castles don't just show up, they're built! Shows us how they're built in verse five.

2 Corinthians 10:5 KJV

5 Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;"

Casting down imaginations

imaginings – the way we think, the reasoning of our brain and thinking process that affects the behavior of our lives.

Strongholds are built by three components: thought, contradiction, imagination.

Notice what Paul says, "Bringing into captivity every THOUGHT.."

So the first thing satan brings in is a thought, just a suggestion.

He can't make you do anything.

He can only tempt, persuade, or reason. He has no power over anything. He had no power over Adam or his wife. He has no power over you unless you agree with his thought or suggestion.

It's OK to question things in life but it's *never OK* to question God's Word!

Your 'NEXT' comes from the 'NEXT YOU'.

Even GOOD THINGS can TAKE CONTROL of your ACTIONS.

1 Corinthians 6:12 KJV

12 All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any.

If the STRONGHOLD STARTED with a THOUGHT, it seems only RIGHT that THOUGHT PROCESSES is where we need to START.

FIRST.... Trust the Lord even when you don't SEE IT clearly or UNDERSTAND.

Proverbs 3:5-8 NLT

5 Trust in the LORD with all your heart; do not depend on your own understanding. 6 Seek his will in all you do, and he will direct your paths. 7 Don't be impressed with your own wisdom. Instead, fear the LORD and turn your back on evil. 8 Then you will gain renewed health and vitality.

7

Proverbs 28:26 KJV

26 He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool: but whoso walketh wisely, he shall be delivered. KJV

Jeremiah 10:23-24 KJV

23 O LORD, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. 24 O LORD, correct me, but with judgment; not in thine anger, lest thou bring me to nothing.

TLB - 23

O Lord, I know it is not within the power of man to map his life and plan his course- 24 so you correct me, Lord; but please be gentle. Don't do it in your anger, for I would die.

Psalms 119:19-20 TLB

19 I am but a pilgrim here on earth: how I need a map-and your commands are my chart and guide. 20 I long for your instructions more than I can tell.

SECONDLY... You need to know WHO you are.

We need to KNOW the TRUTH so we can RECOGNIZE a LIE.

We need to use the spiritual tools and weapons God gives us.

Ephesians 3:14-21 NLT

14 When I think of the wisdom and scope of God's plan, I fall to my knees and pray to the Father, 15 the Creator of everything in heaven and on earth. 16 I pray that from his glorious, unlimited resources he will give you mighty inner strength through his Holy Spirit. 17 And I pray that Christ will be more and more at home in your hearts as you trust in him. May your roots go down deep into the soil of God's marvelous love. 18 And may you have the power to understand, as all God's people should, how wide, how long, how high, and how deep his love really is. 19 May you experience the love of Christ, though it is so great you will never fully understand it. Then you will be filled with the fullness of life and power that comes from God. 20 Now glory be to God! By his mighty power at work within us, he is able to accomplish infinitely more than we would ever dare to ask or hope.

Philippians 2:13-15 AMP

13 Not in your own strength for it is God Who is all the while effectually at work in you energizing and creating in you the power and desire, both to will and to work for His good pleasure and satisfaction and delight.

Philippians 4:13

13 I have strength for all things in Christ Who empowers me [I am ready for anything and equal to anything through Him Who infuses inner strength into me; I am self-sufficient in Christ's sufficiency]. AMP

1 Corinthians 14:4 KJV .

4 He that speaketh in an unknown tongue edifieth himself; but he that prophesieth edifieth the church.

Jude 20 KJV

20 But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost,

Jude 20 TLB

20 But you, dear friends, must build up your lives ever more strongly upon the foundation of our holy faith, learning to pray in the power and strength of the Holy Spirit.

James 1:19-20 NKJV

19 So then, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath; 20 for the wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God.